

four Golden-eyes; he says, "...found from ten to twelve, which is an unusual number for this place, as the shore is very open, and ducks very seldom stop here."

At Newmarket, thirty-four miles north of Toronto, and about the same distance south of Lake Simcoe, some ducks were found on the roadside. At Ayr, sixty-eight miles southwest of Toronto and about thirty-five north of Lake Erie, Mr. W. H. Stockton noticed three Cowheens, in February, dead on the ice beside open water in different small streams. At Forest, twenty-three miles east of Saima (at the south end of Lake Huron) and about fifteen from the lake shore, Mr. Montague Smith found, on March 10, a Cowheen dead on a wood pile in the bush. At Exeter, about the same distance from Lake Huron and some miles further north, Mr. William Sweet saw one Cowheen found alive in a barnyard, and one picked up dead in a field; he also saw one on the snow, but it flew away when approached; a Grebe was found alive in some woods. At Depot Harbor, on the Georgian Bay, Mr. J. Kirkwood noticed, about the middle of February, considerable numbers of ducks flying in from the bay and dropping exhausted on the shore, where most of them died. At Beaumauris, on Lake Muskoka (about thirty miles east of the Georgian Bay), Cowheens were reported by Mr. P. A. Taverner as having been found there early in March in an exhausted condition.

The second week of February was marked by a sudden fall of the temperature in Ontario, and ice formed with great rapidity over a much greater area of water than is usual on the lakes, covering the regular feeding grounds, and leaving no open places, as in the case of a slow freeze-up. The ducks finding the regular feeding grounds covered by ice, and being unable to obtain food in the open lake, apparently made a hurried exit with no particular objective except to get away from the Great Lakes; while this seems the most apparent explanation, other reasons connected with the food supply may be possible. A record of the mean temperature at Toronto as given in the meteorological reports from the 7th to the 15th of February show how sudden was the fall of temperature. The mean daily temperature, Fahrenheit, for February 7 to 15, inclusive, was as follows:

Feb. 7	8.24	Feb. 12	-3.63
" 8	6.75	" 13	-0.18
" 9	-1.50	" 14	11.50
" 10	-5.10	" 15	25.98
" 11	-5.89		

JAMES H. FLEMING, *Toronto, Canada.*

The Gadwall and Yellow Rail near Springfield, Mass. — *Chaulelasmus streperus*. A Gadwall was taken October 14, 1904, in Glastonbury, Conn., thirty miles below Springfield. Individuals of this species appear in the Connecticut Valley only in very rare instances.

Porzana noveboracensis. Ten years ago, in a certain piece of wet meadow land near Springfield, I captured a Yellow Rail. This was the first and only one that to my knowledge had been observed in this part of the State. One day in the autumn of 1901, at the same place, I found four of this species, and there, later that season and each of the three following autumns, I found others. So little has been known, or at least written, about the Yellow Rail, that I took particular pains to observe them. The place where they were found was wet meadow land covered with wild grass, which in October stood, in places where it had not been harvested, to the height of two or three feet and harbored many Virginia Rails and Soras. The grass upon the other part of the land was cut in the summer, and by the middle of October the second growth reached the height of seven or eight inches, and in this portion the Yellow Rails are to be found, they apparently not desiring so thick a cover as do the common kinds. When the bird is in the air the white spots on the wings make the identification an easy matter. Its flight is much like that of the Sora, although it is apt to rise higher. On alighting it usually immediately secretes itself, but not always, as I have seen it on such occasions run with great rapidity. I have flushed all by the aid of a dog, except one, and that rose about twenty feet ahead of me, evidently frightened by my approach. The earliest date in any autumn that I have found them was the 17th of September, and I think that the latest was the 22d of October. In this part of the Connecticut Valley I have been in many meadows of the same character as the one in question, accompanied by a dog educated in such a way that the scent given out by any kind of rail would so attract his attention that he would be likely to make known the presence of such a bird, if any were there, but in these places I have never found a Yellow Rail, and it seems worthy of note that this species should be a regular autumn visitor to a certain piece of meadow land, containing perhaps three acres, and to be found nowhere else in this vicinity at any time. — ROBERT O. MORRIS, *Springfield, Mass.*

Shore Birds Eating small Fish. — In 'The Auk' for January, 1898 (Vol. XV, p. 51), Mr. H. D. Kirkover records an instance of the Greater Yellowlegs feeding on minnows about an inch and a half in length. While on the island of St. Vincent, West Indies, last October, I observed a number of our shore birds feeding on the young of a small fish known as the 'tri tri' (*Sicydium plumieri*), which were at that time ascending the Richmond River, near which I was staying, by thousands. The land about the lower reaches of this river was laid completely bare by the recent eruptions of the Soufrière, and in its present state proves very attractive to all the species of shore birds which visit the island during the migrations. Those observed or proved by dissection to be eating the young tri tri (which were at that time from half an inch to an inch and a quarter long) were Golden Plover (*Charadrius dominicus*), Turnstones (*Arenaria interpres*), Willets (*Symphemia semipalmata*), Pika, or Greater